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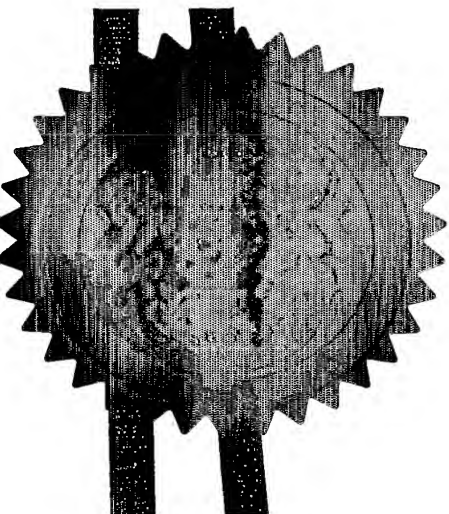
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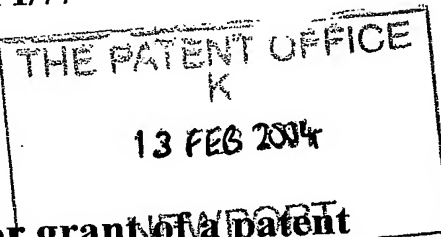
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13 FEB 2004

1. Your reference **P99.GB.PAYN**

2. Patent application number
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0403202.5

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant (underline all surnames)

ROGER PAYN
123 PARK ROAD
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PE1 2UD

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation

8709263001

4. Title of the invention

A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AID

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

Roger Tolfree

"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent

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Number of earlier application

Date of filing
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b) there is an inventor who is not named as an applicant, or
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XX

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Patents Form 1/77

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Description 7 ✓

Claim(s) 2 ✓

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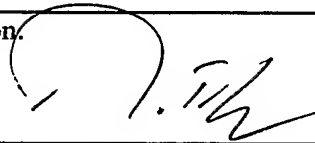
Request for preliminary examination and search (Patents Form 9/77) 1 ✓

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11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

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Date 10 Feb 2004

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom

Roger Tolfree 01354 680730

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DUPLICATE

A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION AID

This invention relates to a communication aid for assisting the user to communicate in a foreign language. In this specification the conventional terminology L1 will be used to indicate a user's native language and L2 to indicate a first foreign language

Many proposals have been made in the past for games designed to help the players to learn a foreign language.

10

For example, patent specification GB 2267835 describes a deck of playing cards intended for this purpose. One side of each card carries a word or phrase in the user's native language, in a foreign language and in a phonetic representation of the foreign language so that the players, whilst playing the game, become accustomed to the foreign language in written and spoken form.

Other known language teaching aids are described in patent specifications GB2319066 and GB1127038. These also use playing cards marked on one face with a phrase in the user's native language and in a foreign language. However in these examples each card also carries a pictorial representation of the relevant phrase.

Whilst these known games are probably of some assistance when learning a foreign language, none of them provide a direct aid to immediate communication with a person who speaks only in a foreign language. For that purpose it is necessary to use a phrase book or electronic translator to find the
5 foreign language equivalent of the appropriate phrase along with the phonetic equivalent. Unfortunately, phrase books and electronic translators are not entirely effective because the phonetic representation of the foreign language does not always allow the user to speak with a sufficiently good accent to be intelligible.

10

It is believed that this invention will make it possible for someone having no knowledge of a foreign language (a) to communicate relatively spontaneously in a foreign language, (b) to be understood and (c) if his pronunciation is not perfect, to be corrected.

15

The invention provides a communication aid for communicating from a first language L1 to a second language L2, comprising a database of possible messages to be communicated, each message being recorded in a first language L1, a second language L2 and a phonetic equivalent of the second language, the
20 communication aid including a two-sided visual display facility designed to allow a selected message to be withdrawn from the database and to be displayed in the first language L1 and phonetically in the second language L2 on a first

side of the display facility, and in a second language L2 on a second side of the display facility.

It will be appreciated that, in use, the display facility is positioned so that the
5 first side is facing the user, who speaks only the first language L1; whilst the
second side faces the person who understands only the second, foreign,
language L2. Using the phonetic display, the user reads aloud the message in the
foreign language L2. Because the second person can see the message, written in
his own language on the second side of the display, he has no difficulty
10 understanding what is said despite any imperfections of pronunciation.
Furthermore, if the pronunciation is not correct he is likely instinctively to
repeat the phrase with the correct pronunciation: this scenario giving the user an
ideal opportunity to perfect his pronunciation skills and eventually to be able to
converse fluently in the foreign language.

15

The first side of the display device preferably carries a marking in language L1
to explain that the user should read from that side. Alternatively (or
additionally) the second side can be marked, in language L1, to indicate that the
user should show that side to the second person. The second side is preferably
20 also marked with a greeting in the foreign language, for example the words "can
you please help me" in language L2.

The invention could be implemented electronically, with the database being an electronically stored library of phrases, which can be addressed and read out using a keyboard or other user interface via a suitably programmed processor. Such an electronic implementation of the invention could be embodied as a
5 fixed installation with a desktop screen or as a hand-held portable device. In another embodiment of the invention, the database and display facility are is provided by a pack of cards each carrying printed wording. By assembling a number of such cards in a pack, each carrying a different message, it is a simple matter to select a selected card, carrying a desired message, whilst concealing
10 the others. The cards may be formed with tabs or be colour coded or otherwise formed so as to facilitate the selection of a card suitable for the circumstances in which the user is likely to find himself. However this is not considered to be an essential element of the invention.

15 Where cards are used, it is an advantage for each card to display two possible messages on respective ends, the writing on the different ends being inverted relative to each other. This allows one end of the card, carrying the message not being used, to be used for holding the card either within the pack or in the user's hand, this end being thus concealed from view whilst the opposite end is
20 displayed.

Two possible ways of implementing the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig 1 shows, schematically, a pack of cards forming a communication aid in accordance with the invention;

Fig 2 shows a sleeve for receiving the pack of cards shown in Fig. 1;

Fig 3 shows the reverse of the card whose front face is visible in Fig.1;

5 Fig 4 shows how the card of Fig 3 may be held in the hand of the user;

Fig. 5 is a front view of an electronic embodiment of the invention; and

Fig 6 is a schematic block diagram of the embodiment of Fig 5.

Referring firstly to Fig 1 there is shown a pack of cards, of which in practice
10 there would be many, but only three of which are shown, at 1, 2 and 3 for simplicity of illustration. These cards carry printed information which forms a database of phrases in the two languages L1 and L2.

Each card is divided into two as shown at A and B and each end of each card
15 carries a phrase in the native language L1 of the user, which is assumed for the purposes of this example to be English. As an option, each end of each card may be provided with a tab as shown in the drawings or have some other mechanism to allow the user to find the card which is appropriate to any circumstances in which he finds himself. So, for example, the top end of the card shown at the
20 front of the pack on Fig 1 has a tab marked "Bill" and carries the message in the English language "May I have the bill please?" It also carries the phonetic equivalent of a translation into a foreign language L2", in this case German, and an indication that this is the side of the card, which the user should read.

By inverting the card 1 it becomes possible to read the inverted writing, which is similar to that previously described but which relates to a different message: "do you accept travellers cheques?"

5

The reverse side of the card 1 is shown on Fig 2 and carries on its two ends, A and B, a greeting in the foreign language together with a translation of the English language message on the opposite face of the card.

- 10 The cards are kept in a cardboard sleeve 4 shown in Fig 3, which allows a selected card to be pushed through either end so as to expose the chosen message. Alternatively, the selected card can be completely removed from the sleeve and held in the hand as shown in Fig 4 so that the selected message is exposed whilst the inverted message on the other end of the card is concealed
- 15 by the user's hand 5.

Figs 5 and 6 show a hand-held electronic unit 6 forming another embodiment of the invention. This unit 6 has a keyboard 7 and two LCD displays 8A and 8B positioned back to back as can be seen from Fig 6. The keyboard 7 is used, via

20 processor 9, to select an appropriate foreign language and to browse through a large number of useful phrases stored in a database 10 along with their associated translations and phonetic equivalents. When the desired phrase has been found the keyboard is used to indicate that this is selected. The processor 9

then downloads from the database (a) the phonetic wording, which is displayed to the user as shown on Fig 5, and (b) the foreign language translation, which is displayed on the opposite side 8B of the display.

- 5 This electronic implementation of the invention can be adapted to perform, in addition, other functions such as are commonly provided by conventional electronic translators.

10 It will be appreciated that many further variations of design and implementation are possible within the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. However, whatever implementation is employed, it is believed that the invention, because of its two-sided display feature, will allow the user to communicate in a foreign language much more easily and fluently than has hitherto been possible using conventional phrase books and translating devices.

CLAIMS

1. A communication aid for communicating from a first language L1 to a second language L2, comprising a database of possible messages to be communicated, each message being recorded in a first language L1, a second language L2 and a phonetic equivalent of the second language, the communication aid including a two-sided visual display facility designed to allow a selected message to be withdrawn from the database and to be displayed in the first language L1 and phonetically in the second language L2 on a first side of the display facility, and in a second language L2 on a second side of the display facility.
2. A communication aid according to claim 1 comprising a pack of cards, each carrying a respective message, the message being printed in language L1 and in the phonetic equivalent of L2 on one side of the card, and in language L2 on the other side of the card.
3. A communication aid according to Claim 1 or 2 in which the second side of each card also carries a greeting in language L2.
4. A communication aid according to Claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the visual display facility is designed to be hand-held and is adapted to carry two messages

simultaneously, with one message being inverted relative to the other and the messages being displayed at opposite ends of the display.

5. A communication aid substantially as described with reference to Figs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the accompanying drawings.
6. A communication aid substantially as described with reference to Figs 5 and 6 of the accompanying drawings.



1/2

Fig1

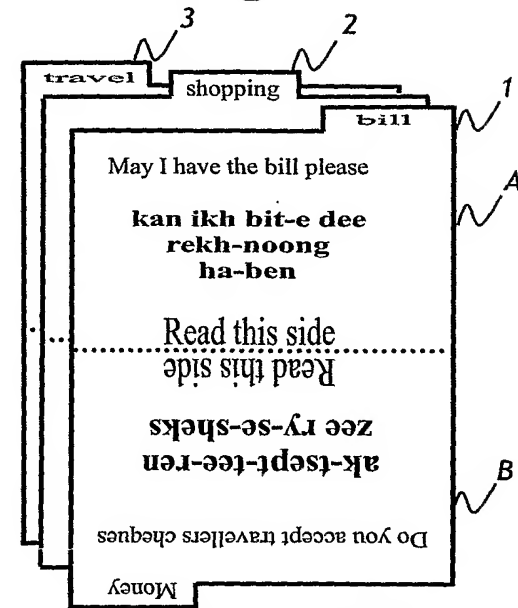


Fig2

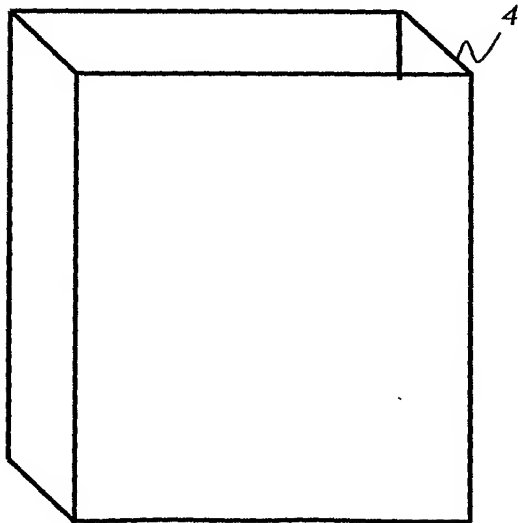
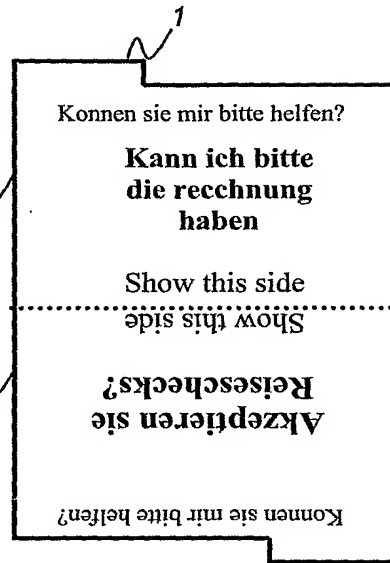


Fig3

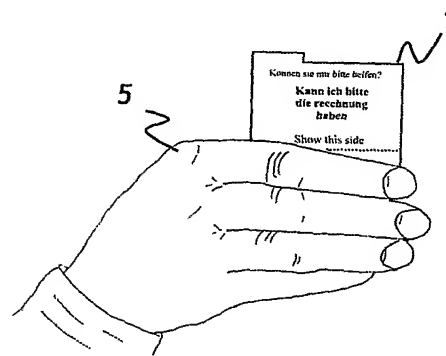


Fig4



